

Rules of Engagement:
State-Sponsored Fear Mongering
by J.J. Johnson - Editor & Chief of Sierra Times 10.01.01

We interrupt this flag waving to bring you a dose of reality. If you smell a stench coming from Washington, D.C, it's not chemical warfare - yet.

It is in my opinion, some of the most irresponsible behavior this nation has ever witnessed from its leadership. I may take some heat for this, but I'd rather get it off my chest and possibly save a few lives than deal with a panic stricken population.

Bush administration officials went on a Sunday morning talk show campaign yesterday stating there will likely be more terrorist strikes in the United States, possibly including chemical and biological warfare, and they urged Congress to expand police powers by Friday to counter the threat.

And they get on US, the American People, for fear mongering??

Here's more: Speaking on CBS's "Face the Nation," Attorney General John D. Ashcroft said there is a "likelihood of additional terrorist activity.", "We think that there is a very serious threat of additional problems now," Ashcroft said. "And, frankly, as the United States responds, that threat may escalate."

Call me stupid but...what's the nature of this threat? Is there a way to prevent or defend against such an attack? No answers from the Bush Administration - except to expand police powers. Thus, people are trying to buy gas masks in droves, and even get anthrax vaccines. Wanna stock up on vaccines? Call your doctor, and this is the answer you'll get:

"All the stockpile that currently exists is owned by the Department of Defense. At this time there is no opportunity for any commercial sales."

Never fear, America. In an interview broadcasted on CBS' "60 Minutes" Sunday night, Health and Human Resources Secretary Tommy Thompson said: "We've got to make sure that people understand that they're safe. And that we're prepared to take care of any contingency, any consequence that develops from any kind of bio-terrorism attack."

Thompson said eight staging areas around America are each stocked with 50 tons of medical supplies - including vaccines, antibiotics, gas masks and ventilators - that can be moved within hours to the site of any bio-terrorist attack. The secretary also said that 7,000 medical personnel are ready to respond to any crisis, anywhere in the country.

This is bull****, and the government needs to be called on it right now. While America is being told not to worry, members of Congress already have their gas masks, and probably more defensive agents. As for the private citizen finding a gas mask of their own, there are none available in the U.S. at this time. The Israeli gas masks (most preferred) are not being sent for some unknown reason to the U.S., as Sierra Times has confirmed from two independent sources. The U.S. models are being impounded for military use only.

This fear mongering coming from this government is repugnant. If the threat is real, we should be told as Americans what should be done immediately - rather than being told, "give us more power, or there will be more victims". This behavior of the Bush Cabinet Secretaries is irresponsible in light of the fact that just last week, Bush pleaded with America to "get back to normal."

You call this normal??

After over 6000 people being killed on American soil, we are told we are going to war. We don't know against whom. We don't know how. We don't know for how long. We don't know what it will take - or even where it will be staged. We can't even show proof of who attacked us and why. We don't even know who are friends are. We have no clear objective (weed out terrorism - anyone care to define that?) We have no exit strategy. All of these parameters that the leaders of this administration said we should have *before* committing troops. Forgive me for not sounding 'unified' , waving my flag at the moment, and criticizing my government. I get that way when I wake up on a Sunday and get told that I am going to die, unless I give more power to them, without even being told why.

Whose freedom are we defending, anyway?

And while I'm on my tirade: If there is a biological attack, you don't have hours to respond. You have minutes - maybe. Else, there will be a lot of dead people, and as the bodies start piling up, those so-called 7000 medical personnel will probably be more concerned with their own personal safety, and that of their families. Like exactly what happened in New York City on September 11, one bio-attack can overwhelm the emergency response personnel in a given area unless pro-active steps are taken.

I could go on for hours, but here's a message for Ashcroft, Rumsfeld, Thompson, and the rest of the cabal in Washington: If there is a threat, tell us what the damn threat is, and if there is a patent on the vaccine, **waive it** - then let the free market go to work. Call your 'friends' in Israel and tell them to either start shipping gas masks, or let the free market make them here. If there is medical equipment available, get it out to the public NOW. Tell us what to look for. Damn you people! You have over 250 million soldiers (who pay the taxes to keep the war machine rolling) ready to take defensive actions for their own sake, and we can't even be told what the threat really is.

Forgive me, President Bush. But it seems like the American citizens are being treated no better than women under the Taliban - just keep veils over our faces and trust the authorities. Why do you think airline pilots want to be armed? Why do you think flight attendants want stun guns? Why to you think people are demanding gas masks and vaccines? Why do you think American is arming itself to the teeth?

Answer: Because it is the right and duty of this government, and We the People to provide for the common defense of this nation. I have yet to see one statement from ANY government official to endorse this fact that is not only Constitutional, but natural.

We don't need details about military operations, but when a threat is directed at the American Population, and a sound and proper defense is considered 'classified' material, then We, the next potential victims have a right to question the nature and integrity of what we are being told - in all areas.

Yes, there are many questions that need to be put in front of this administration. With warnings such as what we heard Sunday, the public is entitled to answers. White House Media Correspondents should not let the Press Secretary leave that podium until we get those answers. Do you hear me, Media? Your butts are on the line as well. For the sake of this nation - do your damn jobs, or else watch the credibility of both you and the government erode to nothing by week's end.

The behavior of the Bush Administration officials on Sunday, September 30, 2001 indicate the need for America to prepare for its own defense - **government protocol not withstanding**. It is this 'disconnect' between the government and its citizenry that in part, caused what happened on September 11, 2001. The American Public must have the information it needs to provide for our OWN defense. And SierraTimes.com is calling for this government to either meet these demands...

... or get the hell out of our way.

Sincerely,
J.J. Johnson

Source: Washington Post

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